



Minuteman UPDATE

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Massachusetts National
Guard monthly
newsletter for members,
families, and friends

Nearly 2,000 Mass. Guard members serving overseas

By Capt. Winfield Danielson, State Public Affairs Officer.

It is not sufficient just to say that the past year-and-a-half have been the busiest time in recent memory for the Massachusetts National Guard; it would be fair to say that it is the busiest time in half a century.

Since September 11, 2001 over 5,000 Mass. National Guardsmen have been mobilized to serve on active duty. Nearly 2,000 of those have served, or are serving, overseas in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. It is the largest number of Massachusetts National Guard mobilizations since World War II.

The first missions for the Mass. Guard in the days following September 11th were truly a return to our beginning; defending the lives and property of the citizens of Massachusetts.

Nearly 500 members of the 102nd Fighter Wing flew Combat Air Patrols over the skies of the Northeast. During October and November 2001, over 200 soldiers from the 26th Infantry Brigade, 42nd Division Artillery and 79th Troop Command protected water supplies, key military facilities, bridges and the Pilgrim Nuclear Power Plant.

At their peak, over 200 soldiers from the 51st Troop Command's 211th Military Police Battalion assisted with security at seven airports throughout the state. Over 400 Mass. Guardsmen from a variety of units helped provide crowd and traffic control for the Boston Marathon and the 182nd Infantry and Civil Support Team helped ensure Boston's 4th of July celebration was a safe one.

Mass. Guard units also contributed to homeland defense outside Massachusetts. Over 200 soldiers from across the state traveled to Utah to

help provide security at the Winter Olympics. The 181st Infantry bolstered security at installations including Fort Monmouth, NJ and Watervliet Arsenal, NY.

The 212th Engineer Installation Squadron mobilized airmen in support of Operation Noble Eagle, as did the 253rd Combat Communications Group, which sent airmen to Langley Air Force Base, VA and Otis Air National Guard Base on Cape Cod. In early September 2002, the 26th Infantry Brigade mobilized an additional 300 soldiers from the 104th and 182nd Infantry Regiments to relieve the 181st.

Units from the Mass. National Guard soon began deploying overseas in support of Operation Enduring Freedom and other missions. The 104th Security Forces Squadron deployed airmen to Ramstein Air Force Base, Germany and to the Middle East, where they supported Central Command (CENTCOM). Over 400 soldiers from the 211th Military Police Battalion's 772 and 972 MP Companies (many having just been released from airport security duty the previous month) mobilized in July of 2002 to CENTCOM and served in Southwest Asia and the Middle East.

E Battery, 1-101st Field Artillery, C Co., 1st Battalion, 20th Special Forces Group, 180th Engineers, Detachment 1, 86th Medical Co., 102nd Security Forces Squadron, 104th Fighter Wing and the 267th Combat Communications Squadron also deployed personnel overseas.

Despite real-world operation pressures, training missions continued. About 100 soldiers from the 104th Infantry deployed to England as part of an exchange with the British Army, and another 100 from the 182nd acted as

OPFOR at the Combat Maneuver Training Center in Hohenfels, Germany. More recently, approximately 40 soldiers from the 267th Combat Communications Squadron deployed overseas in support of CENTCOM this January, many of them having just returned from overseas missions a few months earlier. Also in January, the 747th Military Police Co. – the last remaining company from the 211th MP Battalion – mobilized nearly 160 soldiers to relieve the 772nd MPs, and the 182 Infantry and 101st Field Artillery mobilized a similar number for homeland security missions.

The 379th Engineer Co. mobilized roughly 170 in support of CENTCOM. From alert to mobilization station, the Mass. National Guard had only a week to prepare the unit; a process that normally takes a month. The 379th's send-off ceremony on Camp Edwards featured the wedding of Sgt. Edwin Peterson and Kristen Rosolen, which was performed by Gov. Mitt Romney.

Similar to the 379th Engineers, the 1058th Transportation Co. had less than a week to complete its pre-mobilization activities for nearly 170 soldiers. The 104th Fighter Wing, E Co., 223 Military Intelligence, 110th Maintenance Co., 220th Quartermaster (QM) Team, 321st QM Team, 125th QM Co., 726th Maintenance Battalion Headquarters Detachment and the 1166th Transportation Company all completed the pre-mobilization process in February; over 700 soldiers who are expected to deploy overseas in March.

Col. Manuel Constantine noted, "In the Massachusetts National Guard today, it's no longer a matter of *if* you will be called up, but *when*."

Sheila Edwards promoted to colonel by The AG

By Cadet Lindsey Elder, STARC PAO

"I was very surprised," she said. "I was in the middle of a meeting, but I knew it had to be something important if the Adjutant General was calling me to return to headquarters."

It was.

It was that afternoon, Feb. 28th, that Sheila Edwards became the first female technician to attain the rank of colonel in the Massachusetts National Guard.

Edwards enlisted in 1979 right after graduating from Malden High School and was the Distinguished Honor Graduate of her basic training class at Fort Jackson, SC.

Her first assignment with the Mass. Army National Guard was as a personnel records specialist with the 101st Engineer Battalion. She later transferred to the 26th Yankee Division Band as a trumpet player.

"I had been told by a few people while I was enlisted that I would make a good officer, but it wasn't something I took that seriously," she said. "That's until one day while the band was practicing, this girl that I knew from junior high school band walked in. She had joined the easy way through the Civilian Acquired Skills Program and now outranked me. When I saw that, I went straight to the orderly room and said 'Get me those Officer Candidate School papers now.'"

Edwards entered the Massachusetts Military Academy, now known as the 101st Regional Training Institute, in 1982. She was commissioned a second lieutenant in the Adjutant General Corps and completed her officer basic course at Fort Benjamin Harrison in Indiana.

"When I was younger I felt like I had to prove myself. When you are surrounded by older men in every and any kind of senior position, you had to do every task as well as your male counterparts; if not better."

She served as a company commander twice and as a detachment commander. She describes those years as the happiest and most influential in her career.

"Those positions are when you

really make decisions that effect your soldiers. You're in charge of everything that happens and doesn't happen in those units."

She graduated from Ana Maria College in Paxton with a degree in business administration and went on to get her master's in education with a concentration in organizational management from Endicott College in Beverly.

Edwards is now the full time State Planning Operations and Military Support Officer. She was the Command Logistics Officer for two years both prior to and after 9-11. Her work towards

obtaining resources and financial support prior to the September 11th attacks made a substantial difference in the readiness level and the equipment available when the Mass. Guard was called upon to help in the War on Terrorism.

Her promotion makes her the first female graduate of the Massachusetts Military Academy to make colonel and the first full-time national guard technician to obtain that rank.

Along with the military, taking care of her parents and her nephews are her main priority. "My parents took care of me and I know that they are a big part of where I am today," she said.



Photo by Master Sgt. Pallas deBettencourt, STARC PAO

Maj. Gen. George Keefe congratulates Col. Sheila Edwards on her promotion.

Edwards says the key for women in the military is to set goals. "Receiving this promotion feels great because I'm achieving a goal I set for myself when I became a lieutenant. The rising number of females in the military helps. We have female command sergeant majors now and colonels. It just goes to show you that it can happen. Women are good organizers. That was not realized before because there were so few women in the workplace, but the ability to manage everything in their home and family lives applies in the outside world as well," Edwards said. "You need to set goals, and I'm living proof that they are achievable."

Homeland award to 101st FA soldier

By Staff Sgt. William Patton, 101st Field Artillery

Cpl. Kevin M. Reul of New Bedford, a member of 1st Battalion, 101st Field Artillery, in New Bedford was awarded two Homeland Security related awards. Reul was presented with the Army Achievement Medal for his work in setting up and controlling the communication center at the Pilgrim Nuclear Power Plant in Plymouth for Homeland Security.

He was also awarded the Medal of Merit for his volunteer services towards Homeland Security from February 2002, until September 2002.

Reul has been a member of the Army National Guard for 19 years and has been assigned as a signal maintenance support specialist for 15 years.

DOC and National Guard paint a different picture

Story and photo by Master Sgt. Pallas deBettencourt, STARC PAO

The events of September 11th have left many indelible pictures in the minds and hearts of all.

In a building that houses the Headquarters of both the Massachusetts Department of Corrections (DOC) and the National Guard, the events of that day led to a daily regime of preparing soldiers to deploy in the defense of America and the war on terrorism. Thousands of soldiers and airmen have passed through the halls of headquarters to prepare themselves to face an enemy that is all too familiar, in a war that is new. Mobilized soldiers progress from one station to another checking records, receiving shots, making wills, filling out endless forms and meeting with family assistance staff. The process is not a short one and can consume a soldier's entire day at a time when time itself is a valuable commodity.

Napoleon Bonaparte said, "An army moves on its stomach," and today's soldiers are no different. At headquarters, soldiers being processed are fed through the DOC Culinary Arts Program, staffed by about eight inmates from Pondville Correctional Center in Norfolk, and supervised by DOC staff. The inmates have passed thousands of meals from pan to plate feeding the men and women of the Air and Army Guard who put lives on hold to defend the American people, just as their forefathers have done for over 365 years.

Willie Williams, an inmate in the culinary program, knows what it's like to put your life on hold. Each day Williams would go to work and see soldiers in his chow line, preparing for an uncertain future, and felt the need to do something for them. Williams, who paints and draws in his spare time,



Willie Williams places the finishing touches on a mural honoring the heroes of September 11th.

approached the Adjutant General of the National Guard and offered the use of his artistic abilities. He envisioned painting a telling mural on the cafeteria wall, one that encompasses the events of September 11th and the heroes who stepped forward to ensure our freedoms.

"Morale is always needed in some form or fashion to be a motivator of accomplishments," Williams said. "September 11th brought America together and the only thing that mattered was the strength of the American flag."

Williams worked for five hours each day, over three weeks to finish the mural. It now stands as the focal point of the cafeteria and a mural of morale for each soldier and civilian that passes through the doors of headquarters.

A couple of number 1's

Story and photo by Sgt. Jordan St. John, STARC PAO



Command Chief Warrant Officer O'Sullivan presents his coin to retired State Command Sgt. Maj. Levy.

It was a meeting of firsts. The State's first Command Chief Warrant Officer Thomas O'Sullivan presented the Commonwealth's first State Command Sergeant Major Berthald K. Levy with a Command Chief Warrant Officer coin. The Command Chief Warrant Officer position and title was instituted by the U.S. Army about 18 months ago, with O'Sullivan selected as the first in the position for Massachusetts.

Levy was appointed as the first State Command Sergeant Major in 1970. Levy served during WW II and was part of the allied invasion force to storm the beaches of Sicily. The two have a combined 94 years of military and federal service.